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INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 3420
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0653
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0037
RUZEHAA/CDR USEUCOM INTEL VAIHINGEN GE
RHMFSS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUEHLMC/MCC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 000178

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - CLASSIFY BY LINE ADDED

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/12/2018

TAGS: MARR PGOV PREL PREF EAID NG

SUBJECT: NIGER: DCM MEETS WITH UN SECGEN SPECIAL ENVOY TO
WEST AFRICA

REF: NIAMEY 113

Classified by Richard Roberts, ECON/CON Officer, Reason:
1.4(b) & 1.4(d).

1.(C) Summary. On February 8, UN Secretary General Special Envoy to West Africa General Lamine Cisse briefed DCM on a variety of topics related to Niger and West Africa. Also present at the meeting were a UNDP representative and Embassy's Econoff. Most of General Cisse's remarks about the situation in West Africa were unsurprising; however, his comments on a proposed set of ECOWAS conferences were slightly different from the explanation the Prime Minister provided to Ambassador Allen. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Cisse began the meeting by discussing his work as President of the Cameroon-Nigerian Mixed Commission on the land and sea border disputes between the two countries. He felt that good progress was being made by the commission. He went on to discuss his work on some of the refugee issues facing West Africa. In particular, Cisse said that Libya may expel about 200,000 people, most of whom were sub-Saharan Africans. He stated that this expulsion was a concern for him and had created a difficult political situation. He also raised the problem of the refugees who are escaping the civil unrest in Chad. He noted that most of these refugees are fleeing to Cameroon, rather than Niger.

¶3. (C) Cisse next expressed his concern over the security situation in Mauritania in the wake of the recent attack on a nightclub and/or the Israeli Embassy. He noted that Mauritania's border is large and porous and that its security cannot be guaranteed. Although he was unable to say whether the attack was aimed primarily at the nightclub or the Embassy, he pointed out that the head of Al Qaeda in Mauritania said that in either case, the attack was a good example for others to follow.

¶4. (C) As the discussion expanded to include problems facing other West African countries such as Liberia and Guinea, Cisse stressed the importance of bringing leaders together to help solve problems like regional security and trafficking in drugs, arms, and persons. In order to increase coordinated efforts to combat such problems, Cisse said that ECOWAS would soon organize a conference for West African heads of state to be held in Bamako and hosted by the President of Mali. The agenda for this conference would be established at a preparatory conference to be held in Niamey and hosted by the President of Niger. Cisse said he believed that non-West

African strategic partners, such as the U.S., France, the U.K., and the EU should have a role to play in the preparatory meeting in Niamey. He was less sure that these countries would be included in the conference in Bamako, since the Malian president believed that Algeria opposed France's presence, and Libya did not want any nonregional participation at all.

¶15. (C) Comment. The preparatory conference cited by General Cisse may be the conference that the Prime Minister told the Ambassador the GON would host in March or April (reftel). End Comment.

¶16. (C) In closing the meeting, Cisse remarked that he was planning a joint UN/GON visit to northern Niger to evaluate the humanitarian, human rights, and security situation there.

The presence of landmines in northern Niger may ultimately sideline the visit, but General Cisse remained hopeful that he would be able to surmount this obstacle and get assessment teams to the area soon.

MINIMIZE CONSIDERED

ALLEN